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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Information Radio-Television Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2406

March 31, 1989

BUSH NOMINATES FOUR -- Pres. George Bush has announced his intention to nominate four of the seven assistant secretaries at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. They are: Franklin Eugene Bailey as assistant secretary for congressional relations; James E. Cason as assistant secretary for natural resources and environment; Charles E. Hess as assistant secretary for science and education; and Jo Ann D. Smith as assistant secretary for marketing and inspection.

Bailey has been a government relations representative of the National Cotton Council of America since 1987. He would succeed Wilmer D. Mizell, Sr.

Cason has been principal deputy assistant secretary for land and minerals management at the Department of the Interior since 1985. He would succeed George S. Dunlop.

Hess has been the dean of the college of agricultural and environmental sciences at the University of California, Davis, since 1988. He would succeed Orville G. Bentley.

A former president of the National Cattlemen's Association and a member of the association's executive board, Smith has been an operating partner, secretary and treasurer of Smith Brothers Farming and Ranching, Wacahoota, Fla. She would succeed Kenneth A. Gilles.

OIL SPILL AFFECTS FOREST -- The massive oil spill near Valdez, Alaska, will affect the ecology of the entire area, including the Chugach National Forest, which surrounds Prince William Sound. USDA's Radio News Line will include daily reports from the area. Media coordinator for USDA's Forest Service in Juneau, Alaska, is: Wanita Williamson (907) 586-8849.

FOOD NEWS -- The Spring issue of USDA's Food News for Consumers is available. There's a wealth of food safety information in this issue and what consumers need to know about new food packaging. This issue will tell you what to do with a "sous vide" package of food (if you don't already know). There's also a section of recipes kids (or adults) can use to microwave brunch for Mother's Day (or any other day, too). For a copy, call Marci Hite (202) 447-6445.

CONSERVATION STOCK FOOTAGE -- USDA's Soil Conservation Service is offering 3:42 of stock footage for conservation compliance, including shots of highly erodible land and conservation planning. All the footage was shot in Oregon. The footage is being offered as part of SCS's "Make Your Move Now" campaign to tell farmers they have until Dec. 31 to get a conservation plan. To get a 3/4 inch tape of the conservation stock footage or for more info about the campaign, call Diana Morse (202) 447-4772.

UP ONLINE -- USDA's Radio and TV Division now provides both the Farm Broadcasters Letter and the Radio News Line to electronic users of USDA's "EDI Service," "USDA Online" and a number of other online services. Former Secretary of Agriculture Richard E. Lyng has signed up to get USDA's EDI Service. Among the most recent USDA agencies loading into the EDI Service are: Cooperative State Research Service, Soil Conservation Service and Agricultural Cooperative Service. For more info about online service, contact Russell Forte (202) 447-5505.

FOOD COSTS -- How much are food costs changing? Why? How much of the consumer food dollar goes to the farmer and how much to food processors and marketers? A new USDA bulletin, "Food Costs ... From Farm to Retail in 1988," can answer these questions. Want a copy? Call Marci Hite (202) 447-6445.

SUGAR & SALMONELLA -- The sugar in milk can reduce the number of Salmonella bacteria in infected chickens by 99.9 percent -- for pennies per bird. USDA scientists say they tested both lactose and D-mannose, a natural sugar produced by a Mediterranean plant, by adding the sugars at 2.5 percent to the drinking water of broiler chicks dosed with the bacteria. Contact: John R. DeLoach (409) 260-9484.

ORGANIC FARMING -- Organic farming, which has often been viewed as a counterculture business run by flaky hippies, is going mainstream, according to a recent issue of the Wall Street Journal. According to a recent Louis Harris Poll, 84.2 percent of Americans said they would buy organically grown food if it were available, and 49 percent would pay more for it. Some 20 big supermarket chains have started stocking organic produce. Organic farming contact at USDA: Paul O'Connell (202) 447-5468 or Dan Kugler (202) 447-3640.

FASTER FAST FOODS IN THE CAR -- Today's fast foods may not be fast enough for tomorrow's busy consumers, says David Mellor, poultry marketing specialist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. As the new century begins, about one-fourth of our cars will come equipped with microwave ovens, says John Stanton, a researcher and food marketing consultant at St. Joseph's University, Philadelphia, Pa. Stanton says people will want "one-handed food," easy to open and prepare in the car microwave, and easy to eat with one hand while driving. Mellor says 25 percent of Americans already eat breakfast in the car. Favorite breakfast finger foods are breakfast tacos and other poultry products. Contact: David Mellor (409) 845-4319.

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1660 -- Can you actually see pictures on your radio? Gary Crawford thinks so. That's why he's going to be showing some remarkable slides of some U.S. farm families ...slides taken by a documentary photographer who spent seven months living with troubled farm families in Illinois. (Weekly 13-1/2 min. documentary)

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1649 -- USDA News Highlights; farm programs sign-up update; more biocontrol efforts; a new system for figuring world farm trade; what are the top farm export states? (Weekly reel of news features)

CONSUMER TIME #1141 -- Fish problems; the ideal ice cream; RDA's and the elderly; calcium meets carbonation; please, buy me a horse! (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 - 3 min. features)

USDA RADIO NEWS LINE -- Wednesday, April 5, horticultural exports; Tuesday, April 11, U.S. crop production, world ag supply & demand; Wednesday, April 12, World ag production, world oilseed situation, world cotton situation; Thursday, April 14, milk production.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWS LINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m. EST each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

AGRICULTURAL UPDATE and USDA NEWS SERVICE are available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

Thursdays AG UPDATE/USDA NEWS SERVICE, 7:30-7:45 p.m., EST,
ORIGINAL UPLINK Transponder 12D

Saturdays AG UPDATE/USDA NEWS SERVICE, 10:30-11:15 a.m., EST,
ORIGINAL UPLINK Transponder 10D

Mondays AG UPDATE/USDA NEWS SERVICE, 8:30-9:15 a.m., EST,
REPEAT UPLINK Transponder 12D

OFF MIKE

OPTIMISM...is reported in North Dakota's Red River Valley, says Mike Hergert (KNOX, Grand Forks). Outlook is good for prices, and, unlike last spring, farmers are voicing less concern about sufficient moisture to get crops started. Mike says the message he hears is that producers want the export bonus program continued.

ONE OF THE DRIEST...winters in 40 years has reduced rainfall 50 percent in some winter wheat areas, helping to create the near record 4.7 million acres suffering wind erosion. Last year at this time 71 percent of the wheat crop was good to excellent, this year only 16 percent. Kelly Lenz (WIBW, Topeka) says due to dryness and winter-kill many Kansas producers will be lucky to get last-year yields on 22 percent more acreage, and 20 percent will likely be abandoned. But good spring rains in April can save the dry crop. It's still too early to write it off in many areas.

Farm Broadcasters Letter
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U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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DAILY UPDATES...are now available on our Radio News Line regarding oil spill cleanup efforts in Alaska. USDA's Forest Service is involved. Oil in Prince William Sound is coming ashore on the Chugach National Forest. Most reports feature actualities. Service will continue as long as necessary. TRANSFER...from Lubbock, Texas, to Washington, D.C., is underway for Blair Stewart (KFYO, Lubbock). After six years he's hanging up his earphones as assistant farm director for a position with Delta Airlines. Jim Stewart says no decision has been made about a replacement. Jim's one of those special people who knows if they'll love it in Lubbock. USDA...radio has an opening for a farm broadcast reporter. Closing date is April 19. For details contact Laura Farrior (202) 447-5833 and ask for announcement number OGPA-89-10A.



VIC POWELL, Chief, Radio & Television Division